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**Theme 3.** Sustainability of grasslands- social and policy issues

**Sub-theme 3.5.** Policy issues related to sustainable grassland production

## **Golla - the semi nomadic pastoralists and small animal bioconservationists of Odisha, India produce animal proteins from minimum to maximum for many**

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### **Introduction**

*Golla*, the nomadic pastoralists of Odisha, is one of the ancient nomadic pastoralists of southeastern part of India. In the state of Odisha, *Golla* are found in districts of Ganjam, Gajapati and to some extent in Nayagrah district. In Ganjam and Gajapati, the *Golla* are mostly present in different villages, locally called as “*Golla Gaon*” means *Golla* village.

The *Golla* rears goats and sheep by practicing migration through natural grass and pasturelands. The people of *Golla* community are generally illiterate, hard working, enduring, brave and efficient traditional healers of small ruminants. The practice of migration, not only help in biodiversity conservation of local sheep and goat breeds but also help in propagation of seeds, grains, herbs and significantly contribute to social unity and land fertility. Their outstanding practices in biodiversity and natural resources management while on migration results in producing animal proteins from minimum to maximum for many in Odisha.

### **Materials and Methods**

The *Golla* life, culture, migration, practices of traditional knowledge t, the system of small animal breeding and production was documented through “*Pathe Pathshala*”-The moving school for pastoralists; at their place of choice, timing suited to them was conducted in their language.

In Odisha a total of 514 “*Pathe Pathshala*” have been conducted out of which 42 were with the *Golla* Pastoralists. During the *Pathe Pathshala* with *Golla*, 32 traditional practices were recorded and 41 plants and herbs that were used for medicinal purposes. Out of these, three are grasses. (*Cynodon dactylon*-3 varieties, *Tridax procumbence* and *Cyperus rotundus* sp).

### **Results and Discussion**

Most of the *Golla* people live in *Golla* villages called ‘*Golla Gaon*’. Each *Golla Gaon* is situated near a forest and/or near a hill. Each *Golla* male starting from the young age of 16 to 70 years old, remain outside the village with the flock of sheep and goats locally called “*Mandaa*”. They go on migrating from place to place through the traditional pasturelands in valleys and mountains. *Gollas* move near about 20-30km a day while grazing the animals. A ‘*Mandaa*’ of goats and sheep may consist of 3000-5000 goats and sheep. While migration, *Golla* pastoralists practice low input based traditional knowledge in natural resource management, rotational grazing of pasture land, herbal healing of animals.

### **Traditional knowledge of *Golla***

1. Dropping of goat is mixed with goat milk and warmed a little. Then a paste is prepared and smeared on the site of a bone fracture and immobilized the bone with a bamboo splint. This heals the fracture wonderfully within 20 days
2. Heating an iron rod in the fire and cauterizing the head and neck treats paralysis. The fire is prepared from the dry goat dropping. This method of activating nervous system is very effective.
3. While migrating, sick animals (*Daalua* breed of goats) identify the herbs in their own and eat them as auto treatment and also for autodeworming.
4. In rains, most of the animals move to graze on mountains.
5. The young kids are not allowed to drink water from outside. Only milk is fed to kids up to 3 months age.
6. They allow kids to eat Neem (*Azadirachta indica*) leaves for deworming. It effectively works as deworming agent and also as prevention against goat and sheep pox.
7. At night, the teats of the mother does are sealed by locally prepared caps to prevent over feeding by the kids.

8. There is better conception rate in Does, after breeding, if the head *Golla* stays on at the ‘*Mandaa*’ and does not return home.

### **‘Golla’ - The Biodiversity Conserver and Natural Resource Manager**

The *Golla* community while practicing migratory pastoralism contributes immensely to biodiversity conservation.

1. *Golla* are the best traditional animal breeders. People in villages, wait for the *Golla* to come to their village. People get best breeding stocks of sheep and goat from the *Golla* and in turn they in exchange give their best animal breeding stock. This is like an informal animal fair on the move
2. The night stays are sometimes longer, that lasts 2-3days in one village, by this time the land on which they keep their flock get fertilized.
3. The *Golla* brings seeds, grains from their own village and take back seeds from the farmer’s enroute, thereby conserving biodiversity.
4. The *Golla* plants herbs, grass enroute to ensure fodder availability during future migration.
5. The *Gollas* are traditional animal healers who utilize local plants and herbs during treatment. Thereby they train the local people in how to utilize the local biodiversity products and best nurture the biodiversity.

### **Conclusion**

*Golla* system of pastoralist is a perfect example of low external input based sustainable livestock rearing system. Most of the mutton and chevon demand of Odisha is met by Ganjam goat and sheep reared by *Golla* pastoralist.

The migration and sustenance of life together makes the system a perfect endogenous development- a system that produces food from minimum to maximum for many.